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graph. It is most likely, as Dr. Harkavy suggests, that the document was written by the Karaite Sahl ben Matzliah, who may have added some invective matter of his own, for we know that Saadyah was a thorn in the side of the Karaites. However, Saadyah himself mentions most of them in the *Galuy*. In this last document we find numerous names of friends and enemies of Saadyah, hitherto unknown. Other names will follow in the part of Dr. Harkavy's work which will give the biography and the bibliography of Saadyah.

We may hope that in the meantime some documents concerning Saadyah will be discovered amongst the fragments in the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg and in other libraries. One thing is certain—that the biography of Saadyah will have to be rewritten, as well as the notices of the contents of his numerous works. The part of the fifth volume of Graetz's *History of the Jews* relating to Saadyah is already superseded, and should be used with great caution.

A. NEUBAUER.

#### Leimdoerfer's "Kohleth."

*Das heilige Schriftwerk. Kohleth im Lichte der Geschichte. Neue Forschung über Ecclesiastes nebst Text, Uebersetzung und Kommentar von David Leimdoerfer.* (C. FRITSCHKE, Hamburg, 1892.)

THE saying of the Rabbis that the Law can be explained in forty-nine ways is certainly more than justified in the case of Kohleth. Dr. Leimdoerfer mentions in the preface to his book that Knobel speaks of thirty-three translations and commentaries from 1609 to 1833; Graetz gives from 1836 to 1868 not less than nineteen, and Reuss from 1871 to 1890 about the same number, altogether seventy-one Christian writers, not to speak of commentaries written in Hebrew, of introductions to the Old Testament, and many essays in various periodicals. None of these numerous commentaries have satisfied Dr. Leimdoerfer, either for the explanation of the historical facts alluded to in the book, and consequently for the date of its composition and for its author, or for the exegesis; and although Dr. Leimdoerfer states that Graetz's commentary stimulated him to his present work, he follows his own way in every respect.

Let us begin with the date of Ecclesiastes. Dr. Leimdoerfer shows that the author of Kohleth speaks (a) of a king who was, and is no more, in Jerusalem, who is wiser than all before him, and this alone excludes already the authorship of Solomon, (b) of a general misrule, (c) of a despotic and warlike régime, (d) of materialism which prevails in the kingdom, (e) of fanatics in religion and believers in

superstition, (*f*) of wise men in opposition to fools, (*g*) of literary men (בעלי אספוח) and learned men (חכמים), (*h*) of the existence of an oral law, (*i*) of want of patriotism (which is deduced from the use of אלהים for the name of God and not יהוה); (*j*), finally, of the language in which the book is written. From all this it results clearly that *Kohleth* cannot be referred to the Solomonic epoch. In the epoch when the book was written, a king reigned who came from prison to the crown, who was a despot, who did not reward merit, who chased holy men from the sanctuary, and who favoured men without merit. This king does not care for the tears of the oppressed, neither for wise counsel; he is not independent, although an old man, but he is a fool, and a lad (נער, which means, according to Dr. Leimdoerfer, he is dependent like a slave), he is surrounded by princely fools, who see the ruin of the State, but care only for pleasure and wealth, without thinking that there is a judgment; the king carries on wars more for victory, money, and booty than for politics. He has a son, who will be some day his successor. This, says Dr. Leimdoerfer, is not the picture of Herod the Great, as Graetz proposes, neither one of the Persian satraps, as others believe (for they were not kings); and amongst post-exilic kings (for pre-exilic kings are out of the question for obvious reasons), the historical facts alluded to can only be applied to Alexander Jannæus (105 to 79 B.C.), who was released from prison after the death of Aristobulus I. by Queen Salome. He disregarded and even persecuted the wise men of the Pharisees; he carried on many wars; he oppressed the people; and in his time the Tetragrammaton was no more pronounced, even by the high-priest. The references to these historical facts in *Kohleth* are fully proved with great skill and learning by our author, if we except the forced explanation of the word נער as "slave, which is not independent," and the identification of the Essenes with those who practise superstitions. Thus the skit on the king and his time, as given in *Kohleth*, could be admitted to relate to Alexander Jannæus. But if so, the title "Holy book," which Dr. Leimdoerfer gives, is not right, for if *Kohleth* is holy, it must be composed by Solomon, and no historical argument ought to prevail against his authority; on the other hand, if it is composed as late as 105 B.C., *Kohleth* cannot be holy.

So far we can follow our author's reasoning. But that is not the case concerning the author of *Kohleth*, who is, according to Dr. Leimdoerfer, none else but Simeon ben Shetah, a relative, and according to other traditions, even a brother of Queen Salome. For this assumption there is not a shade of reason, except that no other literary name is known at the time of Alexander Jannæus who could have composed such a book, which has much analogy with some sayings quoted in his name. We believe that the Pharisaic school included

other learned men besides our Simeon. As for the few sayings which are reported in his name, we cannot find that they have any striking analogy with those in Koheleth, except that both are ethical sayings. Is it not strange that a relative of the queen should draw such a picture of her husband? We cannot believe it. Besides, if Simeon ben Shetah, who was one of the *duumvirate*, were the author of Koheleth—a circumstance which must have been known by some of his intimates—it would not have been forgotten some fifty years later, when the admission of Koheleth into the Canon was disputed. More strange it is when Dr. Leimdoerfer says that the words, "Koheleth, son of David, king in Jerusalem," refer to Simeon, who styled himself מלך, analogous to the use of the word as a title for Rabbis of the third and fourth centuries C.E., Simeon saying of himself that he is the literary king in Jerusalem.

In the chapter of the thoughts and language of Koheleth, Dr. Leimdoerfer follows his predecessors; they contain Hellenistic thoughts and words. Whether there is an allusion to the oral law in the expression "wise men" and "masters of the assemblies" (xii. 11), and whether תקן ("set in order," xii. 9) alludes to the תקנות (institutions) made by the Synhedrion, as our author thinks, we cannot decide, the history of the beginning of the oral law not being fixed yet on a sure basis. A subsequent chapter is devoted to the possible objections which may be made to his theories, and next our author gives a chapter on the relation of Koheleth to the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus; of course Dr. Leimdoerfer comes to the conclusion that Koheleth could not have been written before 64 B.C., and consequently the author of Ecclesiastes has borrowed from Sirach. The concluding chapter shows the *ensemble* of Koheleth to be a logical arrangement as far as Semitic genius allows it. It contains (a) Koheleth's *Monologue* (chaps. i. to iii.); (b) the picture of the unhealthy Government and State (chaps. iv. to vi. 8); (c) the polemical Wisdom (chap. viii. 6 to xii.); finally (d), the collecting and instructing Wisdom. This is followed by the Massoretic text, a German translation, with copious notes. Of what use the Massoretic is we cannot understand, unless the book is intended for use in schools and synagogues. The German translation is very hard, and often not only ambiguous, but to us unintelligible. What means, for instance, *Er weiss anzugehen gegen die Lebenden* (vi. 8, לַהֲלֹךְ נֹגֵד הַחַיִּים); or, in the next verse (vi. 9, מִהֲלֹךְ נֹפֵשׁ), *Als das Angehen der Willens?* The few emendations in the notes are not always happy, even when borrowed from predecessors. Why not take, e.g., שם, in iii. 17, in the sense of "he has fixed," instead of the sense עִמּוֹ, "with him"? iv. 17, אִינִם

cannot refer to these "who hear," which are not mentioned in the verse, but it certainly refers to the fools (כסילים), who do not know *even* to do evil (A. and R. V., v. 1, "for they know not that they do evil," does not represent the Massoretic text). Of course, the translation and the notes are often adapted to find allusions upon which Dr. Leimdoerfer bases his conjectures for the date and the author of Koheleth. But in spite of all criticism which may be considered as subjective, our author's book is worth reading, even if only for his introductions to the various matters which Koheleth contains according to his view, for we find much learned information in them. A more simple style in these parts would, in our opinion, have made the arguments clearer.

A. NEUBAUER.

*Die haggadischen Elemente in den Homilien des Aphraates, des persischen Weisen.* Von Dr. SALOMON FUNK. Kauffman, Frankfurt-on-the-Main.

To the indefatigable zeal of the late Prof. W. Wright we owe the edition of the Homilies of Aphraates, the Persian sage, written in the Syriac language. In consequence of his having changed his original name into Jacob, when he was nominated Bishop of the Monastery of Mar Mattai, his Homilies were ascribed for a considerable time to Jacob of Nisibis. Another reason why Aphraates' writings had almost fallen into oblivion is given by Ryssel (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1883, p. 338), viz., because they abound in rabbinical elements. The author of the above-mentioned little book pursues the task of picking out these haggadic portions from the Homilies and collating them with the corresponding passages in the Talmud and the Midrashim. It is, therefore, a welcome contribution to the study of the religious literature in the beginning of the fourth century; it also shows how parts of the Jewish traditions became known to Christians. Many were in this manner also incorporated in the Koran and the Moslim traditions. The author quotes the respective passages from Wright's edition, and places after each the original Talmudical passage or Midrash, both with German translations and commentary. Unfortunately the Syriac quotations show many *errata*, which, however, I need not here point out, as they may be easily detected by comparison with Wright. Introduction and appendices prove that the author has studied his subject successfully.

H. HIRSCHFELD.